Citizen's network: fulfilling the potential of public passenger transport in Europe. Green paper

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Parliament adopted the report by Mr Florus WIJSENBEEK (ELDR, NL) on the Commission's Green Paper on the citizens' network. Noting that more than three quarters of all journeys in the European Union are currently made by car, the EP proposed, in line with the Green Paper's objectives, a scenario conducive to the functional and rational use of a public network for citizens. Referring to the Union's special competence in relation to the trans-European networks and particularly the coordination of national infrastructures, the resolution addresses the following topics: - financing: the operation of public transport services should essentially be paid for by the travelling public. Each Member State should envisage a system of road pricing in order to achieve the objectives of the trans-European and Citizens' networks; - intermodality: it is important to promote public transport such as (where possible electric) taxis or car sharing, to expand facilities for the use of bicycles (cycle paths) and to establish integrated park-and-ride interchange points; - planning: the EP considered it important not to establish new residential areas, business estates or recreation areas except in conjunction with transport facilities. It drew attention to the need to locate more transport facilities underground and in multi-level configurations, and to promote measures discouraging the use of private cars in towns (parking policy; reserved lanes for public transport; better infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians; road safety; access to public transport facilities for disabled people). With regard to public transport, the resolution focuses on: effective and on-going training of public transport staff in the use of new technologies and in providing services; adoption of the system of contracting out local and regional public transport, whether at network level or at line level; support in the restructuring of small scale services in rural areas; guarantee of universal service provision; access to public transport taking into account the needs of physically disabled travellers, the security requirements of women, and of part-time or shift-workers; the setting out of quality standards; provision for transporting bicycles on public transport; the upgrading of the various types of rail transport and waterways in urban and semi-urban environments; links with the outermost and island regions; a single fares and payment system on the various networks. The resolution also encourages research into environment- and health-friendly modes of transport (using alternative energies, biodiesel-fuelled and electric-powered cars), as well as greater use of information technologies and telematics (ticketing systems, smart cards). In conclusion, the Commission was called upon: - to publish a White Paper containing specific proposals and a coordinated directorate plan on the Citizens' network and to organize an information campaign thereon; - to fund a series of pilot projects to meet the long-term objectives of the Citizens' network, in conjunction with the Member States.